

CLVT-1 104

IRELAND-MILLS-GANTT HOUSE

Mutual

Private

late 18th century

This 1 1/2-story frame house was built in the late 18th century and served as the residence of the Ireland and Mills families before the Civil War. A slave coachman, Albert Gantt, frequently drove his owner, Dr. John Parker, here to visit. In 1864 when "Abe Lincoln put out the call" for Negro volunteers, Gantt joined the Union Army. He fought in major battles around Petersburg, Virginia, was wounded and returned to Calvert County, where he married the woman he had stolen away to court while a slave. After several years of farming, the couple bought this farm. Their son McKinley, pictured standing in front of the house, is the present owner of the property.

\*ADD PHOTO

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

CT-109

0501095204

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

MCKINLEY GANT'S HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER The unmarked road to his house juts off abruptly to the north from LaVeille Road, 1/3 mile west of its jct. with Rt. 264

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Mutual

☒ VICINITY OF

First

STATE

Code

COUNTY

Code

Maryland

24

Calvert

009

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

## OWNERSHIP

## STATUS

## PRESENT USE

☐ DISTRICT☐ PUBLIC☐ OCCUPIED☐ AGRICULTURE☐ MUSEUM☐ BUILDING(S)☐ PRIVATE☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☒ STRUCTURE☐ BOTH☐ WORK IN PROGRESS☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ SITE**PUBLIC ACQUISITION****ACCESSIBLE**☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ OBJECT☐ IN PROCESS☐ YES: RESTRICTED☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ BEING CONSIDERED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ NO☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

McKinley Gant

Telephone #: (301) 586-0185

STREET &amp; NUMBER

LaVeille Road

CITY, TOWN

STATE, zip code

Mutual

☒ VICINITY OF

Maryland

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Liber #:

Folio #:

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**

— EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
 — FAIR

— DETERIORATED  
 — RUINS  
 — UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

☒ UNALTERED  
 — ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
 — MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

This house and its occupants have a fascinating history, eminently worthy of further research. Especially unique is its present occupant, McKinley Gant, an 80 year old gentleman who was born in this house and named after the President. Age has not clouded his mind, and his memories are a gold mine of information about the life of blacks and whites in Maryland and elsewhere in the 19th and 20th centuries. He is intimately acquainted with the history of this house, and remembers the story of how his father came into possession of it. This account as well as his informative descriptions of slavery, slave cabins, and black participation in the civil war were recorded in a taped oral interview. <sup>\*</sup> Also recorded were his experiences in World War I where, as an infantryman, he fought in several major battles along the front in France.

His house stands at the end of a long, narrow dirt drive that passes through a portion of his 200 acres, ~~that~~ which he once farmed. Most of the land has since grown up in timber. The structure is a long, one-story and a half house, built in the late 18th century. According to Mr. Gant, in the second quarter of the 19th century the house was the residence of Dr. Leonard Mills, owner of the plantation of which this was the main house. McKinley Gant's father, Albert Gant, purchased the house and the surrounding acreage from a Mr. Ireland, <sup>GP2</sup> who had acquired it from Dr. Mills. Albert Gant had been a slave on a nearby farm in Calvert County and had visited the house several times while the coachman for his owner (Dr. Parker) and bought it about ten years after his discharge from the Union Army (for the complete story, see transcription of oral interview).

Today the house is surrounded only by a few small 20th century structures. But in earlier days, outbuildings such as the kitchen, smokehouse, slave cabins, and other structures stood behind and to the sides of it. At present only the large boxwoods, heritage rose bushes, and other shrubs remain from the "antebellum" era. Though in need of major repair, the house is in fairly stable condition.

The house is spacious, securely built, and has a number of simple decorative features, which <sup>it</sup> provided its occupants with a comfortable, though not elegant, way of life. It stands in sharp contrast to slave/tenant houses and reflects the fact that it was built by a family that had money and land.

The house faces east and is composed of two sections, one room deep. The northern section is the longer and is probably earlier. The structure measures 46'6" in length, 29' in depth, and c.20' in height. It has five bays along its facade (two doors and three windows) and two (two doors) across the rear. Much of the front of the first story is enclosed by a screened porch. The hewn and pit sawn timbers of the frame are sheathed

*\* Tape in the possession of George McDavid: a transcription is being deposited with the Md. Comm. on Afro-American and Indian History and Culture, and with the Md. Hist. Trust.*  
 CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Further research of this house and the Gant family is urgently recommended. Mr. Gant is an excellent resource. He has no children.

The house and sites of associated slave houses have substantial archaeological potential.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

George McDaniel

2/76

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Maryland Commission of Afro-American &amp; Indian History and Culture

STREET &amp; NUMBER

TELEPHONE

12 W. Madison Street

(301) 383-3648

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Baltimore

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

DESCRIPTION (continued)

-2-

Number 7

by beaded weatherboards, painted white, and attached by wrought nails on the northern section and by cut nails on the southern. The A roof is punctuated by three gable roofed dormers.

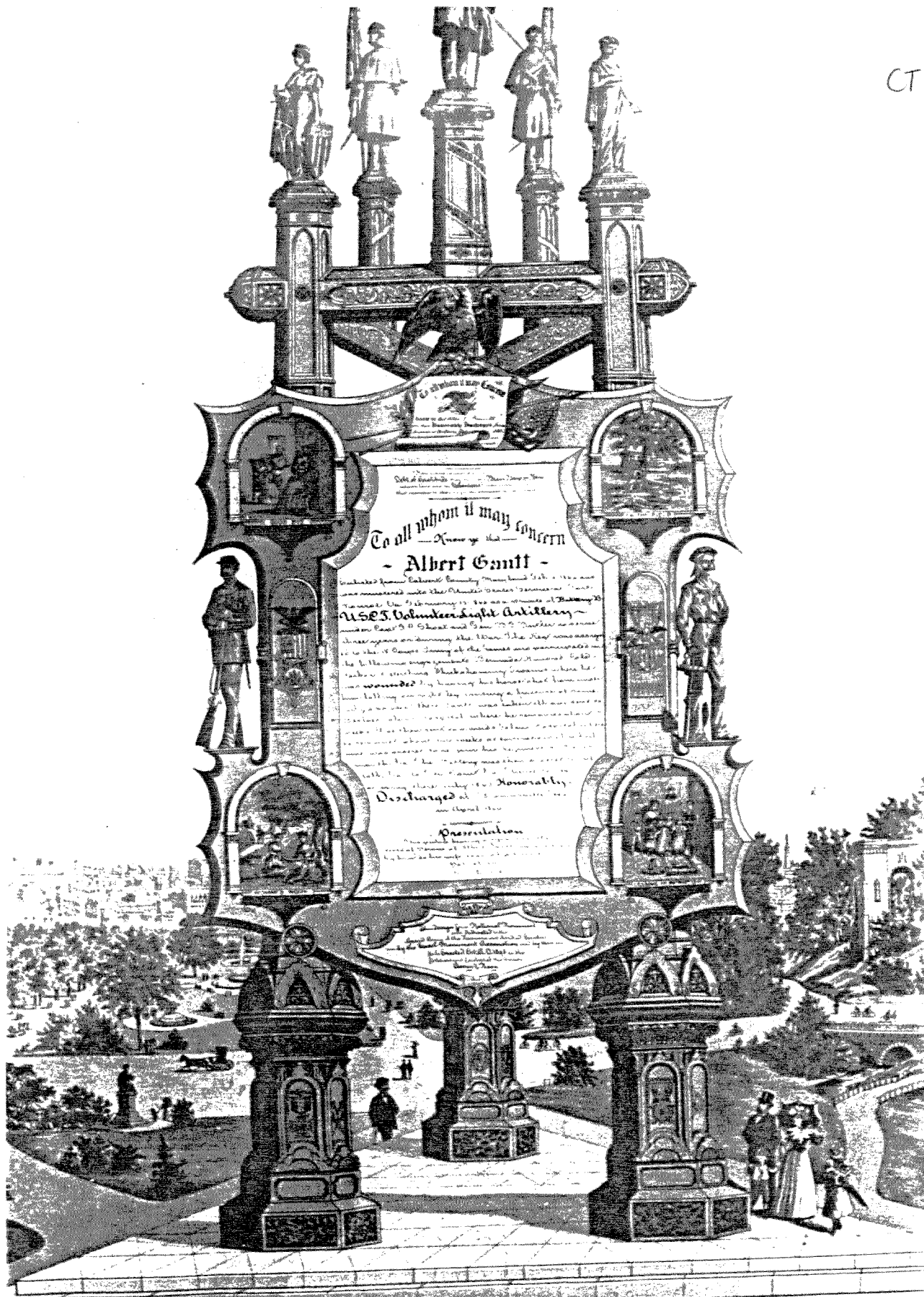
A large, outside end brick chimney with a stone base ascends the northern gable side. Fireboxes open into the rooms on each story. In the stone base on the outside, a firebox opened into the "doctor's office", which had been attached to this end of the house and which has been torn down. Another large chimney stands between the two sections with fireboxes back to back opening into the rooms of each story of each section.

Extending from the southwest portion of the back of the house is a moderately sized el, two rooms in width. The northern room is used for storage; the southern room is the kitchen. Though he has a gas range, Mr. Gant still prepares food, such as biscuits (because, he said, the wood stove doesn't bake them as fast) in the wood stove. Only recently he removed from the house the wood cook stove that was used, he said, by the "slave people" in the old kitchen which stood out back; its top surface had cracked.

The interior of the main body of the house consists of three rooms downstairs and upstairs. The northern downstairs room is in serious need of repair. The principal walls of the house are plastered; the lath<sup>s</sup> are split and attached by wrought nails. The walls downstairs are bordered by chair rails and at the top by flat surfaced moldings. Beaded vertical planks partition the three rooms and enclose the two stairways, one in the southeast corner of the house, the other in the northwest. A 19th century cast iron stove with lovely details heats the room on the southern end. Each room, contains plain antique furnishings and assorted memorabilia such as a framed commemorative paper describing Albert Gant's participation in the Union Army, also photographs of the Gant family.

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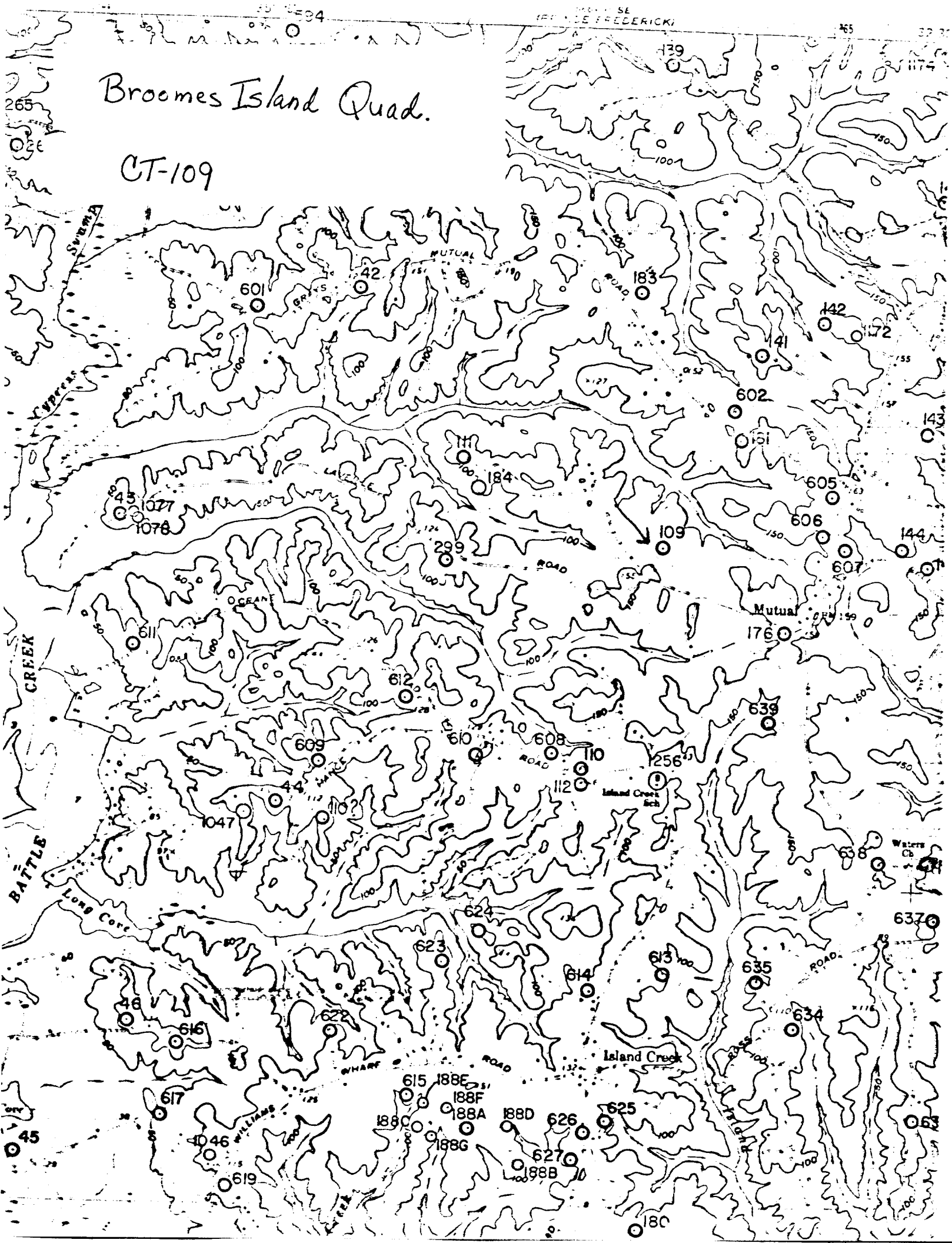






Broomes Island Quad.

CT-109





McKinley GRANT's house (near facade)  
~~CT-109~~

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